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Your Reference: n/a  
Our Reference: 6580-273

December 6, 2001

Commissioner for Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
U.S.A.

Dear Sirs:

Re: **PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**  
**United States National Phase Entry of PCT/CA00/00716**  
**Entitled: A Marker Specific For Escherichia Coli Serotypes**  
**O157:H7; O157:NM and O55:H7**  
**Inventors: Shu Chen, Renlin Xu, Jiping Li**

We are simultaneously entering national phase in the United States for PCT/CA00/00716. The present letter is to file a Preliminary Amendment to the application. Please amend the application as follows:

**In the Claims:**

Please amend claims 3, 5, 10, 11, 13, 14, 19 and 20 as follows:

A1  
3. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid primer comprising (a) a portion of a sequence as claimed in claim 1 or (b) a sequence that is complimentary to a portion of a nucleic acid sequence claimed in claim 1.

A2  
5. (Amended) An isolated nucleotide probe comprising a portion of a sequence as claimed in claim 1.

A3  
10. (Amended) A method of detecting the presence of E. coli serotypes O157:H7; O157:NM or O55:H7 in a sample comprising (a) isolating nucleic acid from the sample and (b) determining if the isolated nucleic acid contains a nucleic acid